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The framework of Media Education and Media Criticism in the Contemporary World: The opinion of International Experts

Situación de la educación en medios y la competencia crítica en el mundo actual: opinión de expertos internacionales

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ABSTRACT

The article analyzes the results of the international survey «Synthesis of Media Literacy Education and Media Criticism in the Modern World», conducted by the authors in May-July 2014. 64 media educators, media critics, and researchers in the field of media education and media culture participated in the survey, representing 18 countries: the USA, the UK, Canada, Australia, New Zealand, Germany, Ireland, Spain, Portugal, Sweden, Finland, Greece, Cyprus, Hungary, Ukraine, Serbia, Turkey, and Russia. Analysis of the data shows that the international expert community on the whole shares the view that the synthesis of media education and media criticism is not only possible, but also necessary, especially in terms of effectively developing the audience's critical thinking skills. However, only 9.4% of the experts believe that media critics' texts are used in media literacy education classes in their countries to a large extent. Approximately one-third (34.4% of the polled experts) believe that this is happening at a moderate level, and about the same number (32.8%) believe that this is happening to a small extent. Consequently, media education and media criticism have a lot of work to do to make their synthesis really effective in the modern world.

RESUMEN

El artículo analiza los resultados de la encuesta internacional sobre la «Situación de la educación en medios y la competencia crítica en medios en el mundo actual», llevada a cabo por los autores en mayo-julio de 2014. Fueron entrevistados responsables de 64 medios de comunicación, educadores críticos e investigadores en el campo de la educación mediática y la cultura de los medios de comunicación de 18 países: USA, Reino Unido, Canadá, Australia, Nueva Zelanda, Alemania, Irlanda, España, Portugal, Suecia, Finlandia, Grecia, Chipre, Hungría, Ucrania, Serbia, Turquía y Rusia. El análisis global de los datos muestra que la comunidad internacional de expertos comparte la convicción de que la situación de la educación en medios y la competencia crítica no es únicamente posible sino también necesaria, sobre todo en términos del desarrollo del pensamiento crítico de la audiencia. Sin embargo, solamente el 9,4% de los expertos en general cree que se utilizan los textos críticos de los medios en las clases de alfabetización mediática en sus respectivos países. Aproximadamente un tercio (34,4% de los expertos encuestados) cree que esto está sucediendo en un nivel aceptable y un porcentaje similar (32,8% de las respuestas) considera que ocurre en una mínima parte. En consecuencia, habrá mucho trabajo que hacer para que la educación en medios y su análisis crítico consiga su implementación eficaz en el mundo actual.

KEYWORDS | PALABRAS CLAVE

Media literacy, media education, media criticism, expert, international survey, functions, genres, critical thinking.
Alfabetización mediática, educación en medios, competencia crítica, experto, encuesta internacional, funciones, géneros, pensamiento crítico.

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1. Introduction and state of the question

One of the most important components of media literacy education is teaching the audience to analyze media texts of different kinds and genres. That is where, in our opinion, media criticism serves as an effective ally (Downey, Titley & Toynbee, 2014; Hermes, Van-den-Berg & Mol, 2013; Kaun, 2014; Masterman, 1985; Silverblatt, 2001; Potter, 2011). Media criticism is an area of journalism, a creative and analytical activity that requires the exercising critical awareness and the evaluation of information produced by mass media, including its social significance, relevance, and ethical aspects (Korochensky, 2003). These objectives are linked to using and analyzing media information of different genres, forms and types: and identifying economic, political, social, and/ or cultural interests connected to it.

Media criticism can be divided into academic (e.g. publication of research findings related to media understanding, aimed mainly at specialists in the field of media studies and professors/instructors in media departments); professional (publications in journals aimed at media industry professionals); and general (aimed at a general audience) (Bakanov, 2009; Korochensky, 2003; Van-de-Berg, Wenner & Gronbeck, 2014). Thus, it is primarily media critics in mass periodicals, along with media educators who strive to raise the media literacy level of the mass audience.

Media competence is multidimensional and requires a broad perspective, based on well-developed foundational knowledge. It is not a fixed category: theoretically, one can raise his/her media competence level, by perceiving, interpreting, and analyzing cognitive, emotional, aesthetic and ethical media information. The audience that is at a higher level of media literacy has a higher level of understanding and ability to manage and evaluate the world of media (Camarero, 2013; Fantin, 2010; Huerta, 2011; Potter, 2011: 12).

There are still pragmatic pseudo-media education approaches –in which real media education is substituted by teaching elementary media skills or encouraging greater media consumption– in use today (Razlogov, 2005). The danger of such a simplistic attitude to media education has been emphasized by many researchers (for instance, Wallis & Buckingham, 2013).

Media criticism has great potential to facilitate educational efforts to develop the audience's media culture. Again, it is a common feature between media criticism and media education, because one of the main objectives of media education is not only to teach the audience textual analysis techniques, but also to understand the mechanisms of their construction and function.

Moreover, British media educators (Bazalgette, 1995, Buckingham, 2006: 271-272 and others) among the six key aspects of media education emphasize the agency, the category, the technology, the media language, the representation and the audience. As a matter of fact, the same key aspects of media are subject to media criticism, appealing to both the professional and the mass audience. This is why a solid connection between media criticism and media education is so important (Hammer, 2011; Potter, 2011).

2. Materials and methods

We conducted an international survey, entitled «Synthesis of Media Literacy Education and Media Criticism in the Modern World», and analysis from May 2014 through early July 2014. We sent out 300 questionnaires to specialists in the fields of media criticism and media literacy education from different countries. The choice of experts was determined by their influence and leadership in the academic community and the number of research articles on the theme they had published in peer-review journals.

On the whole we surveyed 64 media educators, critics, and researchers in the field of media education and culture from 18 countries: the USA, the UK, Canada, Australia, New Zealand, Germany, Ireland, Spain, Portugal, Sweden, Finland, Greece, Cyprus, Hungary, Ukraine, Serbia, Turkey, and Russia. Of these 50% (32 people) were from Western countries, while 32 people were from Russia and Ukraine. The list of

Table 1. What functions of media criticism do you consider the most important for media literacy education of mass audience?

Media criticism functions	Number of experts' votes (%):		
	Russia & Ukraine	Western countries	Total
Analytical	84.4	90.6	87,5
Ideological, political	49.8	68.7	56.2
Info-communicational	59.4	59.4	59.4
Educational	75.0	71.9	73.4
Entertaining, recreation	6.2	31.2	18.7
Regulatory, corporate	18.7	18.7	18.7
Advertising	9.4	40.6	25.0
Artistic, aesthetic	53.1	62.5	57.8
Ethical	59.4	65.6	62.5
Other functions	6.2	18.7	12.5
difficult to say	0.0	6.2	3.1

Table 2. What media criticism genres do you consider to be the most significant/relevant for mass media literacy education?

Genres of media criticism	Number of experts' votes (%):		
	Russia & Ukraine	Western countries	Total
Analytical article about events and processes (present or past) in media sphere	87.5	75.0	78.1
Comments on a media topic	46.9	68.7	57.8
Interview, talk, discussion with media personalities	78.1	31.2	54.7
Film/radio/TV/internet short review	40.6	46.9	43.7
Film/radio/internet long review of the specific media text	43.7	40.6	42.2
Memoirs on a media topic	12.5	3.1	7.8
Open letter on a media topic	12.5	15.6	14.1
Essay on a media topic	34.4	53.1	43.7
Parody on a media topic	12.5	46.9	29.7
Report on a media topic	34.4	37.5	35.9
Portrait (characteristics) of a person from media sphere	37.5	18.7	28.1
Pamphlet, satire on a media topic	18.5	25.0	21.9
Other genre	6.2	15.6	10.9
Difficult to say	0.0	0.0	0.0

experts includes such prominent media educators and researchers of media culture as Kathleen Tyner, Faith Rogow, W. James Potter, Marilyn A. Cohen, John Pungente, Ignacio Aguaded, Georgy Pocheptsov, Hanna Onkovich, Sergey Korkonosenko, Alexander Korochensky, Kirill Razlogov, and other experts to whom the authors are sincerely grateful.

3. Instruments

Thus, the first point of our survey offered experts a list of media criticism functions, of which they had to choose the most important ones, in their opinion. Table 1 shows the results of the first question. The second question dealt with the genres of media criticism that are most applicable to media education.

The third question of the survey dealt with media criticism's degree of compliance with media education functions towards the mass audience. The results are represented in table 3.

The fourth question of the survey concerned the experts' evaluation of the degree of integration of media criticism and media education in public education institutions in their home countries (see table in the next page).

The fifth question related to the experts' estimation of the degree to which certain texts by media critics are used in media education classes in their countries (see table in the next page).

The sixth question dealt with the experts' estimation of which media education objectives can be more effectively reached if supported with the use of media critics' texts. The findings are reflected in the following table.

The seventh question of the survey related to the experts' self-assessment of the extent they synthesize media literacy education and media criticism in their teaching practice (see table in the next page).

4. Results – Discussion and conclusions

The analysis of table 1 shows that the vast majority of experts (87.5%) support the analytical function of media criticism as the most relevant for mass media education. Then follow educational (73.4%), ethical (62.5%), informational-communicative (59.4%), aesthetical (57.8%), ideological/political (56.2%) and ethical (54.7%). The rest of the functions of media criticism (entertaining, recreation; regulatory, corporate; advertising) did not gain the vote of more than 25% of the experts.

Only 12.5% of experts added other functions of media criticism; among them were the functions of critical thinking development, the audience's socialization, and learning about the economic organization of media and its impact on what is produced. The latter, as rightly mentioned by one of the experts, is very important for facilitating discussion of such questions as: what kind of media landscape would we have if

Table 3. To what degree does media criticism in your country exercise media literacy education function aimed at the mass audience (audience of mass press, television, and Internet)?

Media criticism in my country exercises media literacy education function aimed at mass audience (audience of mass press, television, and Internet)	Number of experts' votes (%):		
	Russia & Ukraine	Western countries	Total
To a considerable degree	0.0	12.5	6.2
Somewhat	37.5	43.7	40.6
Very little	56.2	37.5	46.9
Difficult to say	6.2	6.2	6.2

Table 4. How does media criticism integrate with media literacy education of school and university students?

Media criticism integrates with media literacy education of school and university students in my country	Number of experts' votes (%):		
	Russia & Ukraine	Western countries	Total
To a considerable degree	0.0	15.6	7.8
Somewhat	15.6	50.0	32.2
Very little	81.2	31.2	56.2
Difficult to say	3.1	3.1	3.1

everything was financed by selling advertising? Is there still a role for public service media financed out of taxation, and if so, what is that role? Should websites like Facebook be allowed to sell personal data about their users?

We should mention here that while developing the survey, we implied that the function of critical thinking development is a part of the analytical function.

However, if we compare the answers of the experts from post-Soviet countries (Russia and Ukraine), on the one hand and experts from the Western countries, on the other hand, then we are able to see that their views on analytical, informational-communicative, educational, ethical, regulatory, corporate, artistic, and aesthetic functions of media criticism correspond closely, but their opinions about other functions differ substantially. For example, the ideological/political function, gained 49.8% of Russian and Ukrainian experts' votes and 68.7% of Western experts' votes. Entertainment and recreation gained 6.2% of Russian and Ukrainian experts' votes and 31.2% of Western experts' votes. Advertising gained 9.4% of Russian and Ukrainian experts' votes and 40.6% of votes). This considerable difference (ranging from 18 to 31%) demonstrates that Western media educators, critics, and researchers place much more emphasis on the ideological, entertainment, and advertising functions of media criticism. We believe that this can be explained by the fact that media education in post Soviet countries has paid little attention to advertising and entertainment genres until recently; and intensive imposition of communist ideology during the Soviet regime led to media teachers' wary attitude to ideology functions in the post-Soviet era.

The analysis of table 2 demonstrated that the most relevant media criticism genres for media education are considered to be analytical articles about events and processes (present or past) in the media sphere (78.1% experts' votes), comments on a media topic (57.8%), interview, talk, discussion with media personalities (54.7%), short review (film/radio/TV/Internet) (43.7%), essay on a media topic (43.7%), long review

Table 5. Are media critics' texts used in media literacy education classes in your country?

Concrete texts of media critics are used in media literacy education classes in schools and universities in my country	Number of experts' votes (%):		
	Russia & Ukraine	Western countries	Total
To a considerable degree	9.4	9.4	9.4
Somewhat	15.6	53.1	34.4
Very little	43.7	21.9	32.8
Difficult to say	31.2	15.6	23.4

Table 6. What media literacy education objectives can be facilitated by using media critics' texts in media literacy education classes?

Media literacy education objectives that can be endorsed through using media critics' texts	Number of experts' votes (%)		
	Russia & Ukraine	Western countries	Total
Development of good aesthetic perception, taste, understanding, and appreciation of artistic qualities of a media text	59.4	46.9	53.1
Development of analytical / critical thinking, autonomy of the individual in terms of media	90.6	84.4	87.5
Protection from harmful media effects	62.5	56.2	59.4
Satisfaction of various needs of the audience in terms of media	21.9	40.6	31.2
Development of skills of Political / ideological analysis of different aspects of media / media culture	68.7	81.2	75.0
Development of the audience's skills to perceive, understand and analyze the language of media texts	65.6	68.7	64.1
Development of the audience's skills to conduct morals, spiritual, and psychological analysis of aspects of media / media culture	59.4	37.5	48.4
Amplification of analytical skills related to cultural, and social context of media texts	56.2	68.7	62.5
Preparation of the audience for living in a democratic society	43.7	68.7	56.2
Development of communicative skills of the individual	28.1	28.1	28.1
Encouraging audience's ability to create and publish their own media texts	40.6	65.6	53.1
Learning about history of media / media culture	34.4	46.9	40.6
Learning about theory of media / media culture	31.2	50.0	40.6
Other objective	3.1	3.1	3.1
Difficult to say	0.0	0.0	0.0

of a specific media text (film/radio/Internet) (42.2%), and report on a media topic (35.9%). The remaining media criticism genres (memoir on a media topic, open letter on a media topic, parody on a media topic, portrait (characteristics) of a person from the media, pamphlet, satire on a media topic) did not exceed 30% of the experts' votes. Only 10.9% of experts supplied other genres. They mentioned pitches, presentations, intercultural dialogue, open discussions, evaluation of public service announcements, readers' Internet forum inspired by a media critic's publication, etc. In our opinion, this attests to the fact that we have managed to represent the main genres of modern media criticism in our survey.

Table 7. In what way do you (as teacher/instructor/professor in case you teach) use synthesis of media literacy education and media criticism?

As a teacher I integrate media criticism and media literacy education...	Number of experts' votes (%):		
	Russia & Ukraine	Western countries	Total
To a considerable degree	21.9	56.2	39.1
Somewhat	31.2	28.1	29.7
Very little	34.4	12.5	23.4
Difficult to say	12.5	3.1	7.8

However, if we compare the answers of experts from post-Soviet countries (Russia and Ukraine) and experts from the Western countries, then we can see that while they are quite close in their views about such genres of media criticism as short review (film/-radio/TV/Internet), long review of a specific media text (film/radio/Internet), open letter on a media topic, report on a media topic, pamphlet, and satire on a media topic, they differ drastically about such genres as comments on a media topic (experts from Russia and Ukraine, 46.9% of votes, Western experts, 68.7%), interview, talk, or discussion with media personalities (experts from Russia and Ukraine, 78.1%, Western experts, 31.2%), memoir on a media topic (experts from Russia and Ukraine, 12.5%, Western experts, 3.1%), essay on a media topic (experts from Russia and Ukraine, 34.4%, Western experts, 53.1%), parody on a media topic (experts from Russia and Ukraine, 12.5%, Western experts, 46.9%), portrait (characteristics) of a person from the media (experts from Russia and Ukraine, 37.5%, Western experts, 18.7%).

This significant difference (reaching 47% in the case of interview, talk, or discussion with media personalities) shows that in Western countries, media educators, critics and researchers lay more emphasis on entertaining genres of media criticism (e.g. a parody) on the one hand, and on the other hand – prefer contents and composition of «loose» media criticism genres (such as comments and essays). At the same time the analysis of the data in table 2 shows that Russian and Ukrainian experts tend to a larger degree to prioritize genres popular in the post-Soviet media such as interview, talk, or discussion with media personalities and memoirs on a media topic. However, let us bear in mind that it is about priorities, because in their comments many experts wrote that all the suggested genres are important.

The analysis of data in table 3 shows that on the whole experts think that media criticism realizes educational functions on a medium level (40.6% of surveyed experts) or to a small extent (46.9%). Only 6.2% of experts believe that media criticism exercises educational functions to a great degree in their home countries. In the meantime, if the answers of experts from post-Soviet countries (Russia and Ukraine) are compared to the answers of their Western colleagues, we can see that the latter are more optimistic: 12.5% of them do believe that media criticism performs educational functions to a large extent and 43.7% – to a medium extent. However, more than one third of the experts from western countries believe that media criticism has little educational effect. These data, in our opinion, testify to the fact that even in European and North American countries, according to experts' views, the media educational potential of criticism most often remains untapped.

The analysis of the data in table 4 indicates that only 7.8% of experts in general consider that media criticism is integrated with the media literacy education of school and university students to a considerable degree. About one third (32.2% of those polled) think that this integration is at the medium level, and over one half (56.2%) – to a small degree.

Still, comparing the answers of experts from post-Soviet countries on the one hand, and the Western countries on the other hand, we can trace the difference: 15.6% of the latter are sure of considerable degree of usage of media criticism in media education classrooms in schools and universities, while all the experts from Russia and Ukraine left this column blank. This means that experts from post-Soviet countries do not see the examples of considerable integration of media criticism and formal education practices, so it is only logical that 81.2% of them claim that this process is developing very little in their countries. This is accounted for by for the sad fact that the media criticism potential remains untapped in educational institutions.

Table 5 demonstrates that 9.4% of experts in general believe that media critics' texts are used in media literacy education classes in their countries quite often. Around one third (34.4% of those polled) think that the educational application of concrete texts of media critics is implemented at a medium level, and about the same number (32.8% of votes) consider that this is almost not happening.

Among the names of media critics whose texts are widely used in educational practices, Western experts mentioned Marshall McLuhan, David Buckingham, Roland Barthes, Noam Chomsky, Neil Postman, and Denis McQuail, and experts from Russia and Ukraine referred to Irina Petrovskaya, Alexander Korochensky, Georgy Pocheptsov, Roman Bakanov, and Len Masterman. A closer look at these names reveals that Western experts mostly named well-known English-speaking authors (UK, USA, and Canada). For example, authors from Australia and Northern Europe have entered this list at minimum, and Russian and Ukrainian authors were not included at all. On the contrary, experts from Russia and Ukraine gave preference to Russian-speaking authors. In our opinion, this fact confirms the general tendency of both the Western and post-Soviet expert community not to address the wider spectrum of their colleagues' works but instead to focus on a familiar names, mainly from countries that share their mother tongue.

However, if we compare the answers of experts from post-Soviet countries (Russia and Ukraine) and those from the Western countries, then we can see that the number of Western experts that are sure of a moderate level of media criticism application in educational institutions is over one half (53.1%, vs. 15.6% of experts from post-Soviet countries). 43.7% of Russian and Ukrainian experts are sure that this process is undeveloped and one third (31.2%) found it difficult to answer this question at all.

These data, to our mind, account for the fact that in experts' opinion, specific texts by media critics are used in media education practice in schools and universities little or only somewhat. This correlates to the data from table 4 as well.

The analysis of table 6 demonstrates that, according to the experts' opinions, the most important media literacy education objectives that can be facilitated by using media critics' texts in media literacy education classes are the following:

• Development of analytical/critical thinking, autonomy of the individual in terms of media (87.5% of those polled).

• Development of skills of political/ideological analysis of different aspects of media/media culture (75.0%);

• Development of the audience's ability to perceive, understand and analyze the language of media texts (64.1%).

• Amplification of analytical skills related to the cultural and social context of media texts (62.5%).

• Protection from harmful media effects (59.4%).

• Preparation of the audience for living in a democratic society (56.2%).

• Development of good aesthetic perception, taste, understanding, and appreciation of artistic qualities of a media text (53.1%).

• Development of the audience's ability to create and publish their own media texts (53.1% of respondents).

If we compare the answers of the experts from post-Soviet countries (Russia and Ukraine) and experts from Western countries, then we can see the relatively similar views about such media education objectives as the development of analytical/critical thinking, autonomy of the individual in terms of media, protection from harmful media effects, development of the audience's skills in perceiving, understanding and analyzing the language of media texts, and development of communicative skills of the individual. The positions of experts in Russia and Ukraine differ considerably from Western experts about such objectives as:

• Preparation of the audience for living in a democratic society (experts from Russia and Ukraine –43.7% of votes, Western experts– 68.7%).

• Development of the audience's ability to create and publish their own media texts (experts from Russia and Ukraine –40.6%, Western experts– 65.6%),

• Development of the audience's skills in carrying out moral, spiritual, and psychological analysis of aspects of media and media culture (experts from Russia and Ukraine –59.4%, Western experts– 37.5%).

• Satisfaction of various needs of the audience in terms of media (experts from Russia and Ukraine –21.9%, Western experts– 40.6%).

- Learning about the theory of media and media culture (experts from Russia and Ukraine –31.2%, Western experts– 50.0%).

• Learning about the history of media and media culture (experts from Russia and Ukraine –34.4%, Western experts– 46.9%).

• Development of good aesthetic perception, taste, understanding, and appreciation of artistic qualities of a media text (experts from Russia and Ukraine – 59.4%, Western experts– 46.9%).

• Development of skills of political/ideological

analysis of different aspects of media/ media culture (experts from Russia and Ukraine –68.7%, Western experts– 81.2%).

• Amplification of analytical skills related to cultural, and social context of media texts (experts from Russia and Ukraine –56.2%, Western experts– 68.7%).

This significant difference (ranging from 12% to 25%) demonstrates that Western media educators, critics, and researchers place more emphasis on the preparation of the audience for living in a democratic society, developing the audience's ability to create and publish their own media texts, satisfaction of various needs of the audience in terms of media, learning about theory and history of media and media culture, development of skills of political/ideological analysis of different aspects of media/media culture, and amplification of analytical skills related to the cultural, and social context of media texts. On the other hand, Russian and Ukrainian educators, critics, and researchers emphasize the development of the audience's skills in carrying out moral, spiritual, and psychological analysis of aspects of media, and media culture; and development of good aesthetic perception, taste, understanding, and appreciation of the artistic qualities of a media text. Developing the audience's ability to create and publish their own media texts, satisfaction of various needs of the audience in terms of media, and learning about the theory and history of media and media culture get less attention.

We think that these differences are connected to the fact that the development of the audience's skills in carrying out moral, spiritual, and psychological analysis of aspects of media and media culture and development of good aesthetic perception, taste, understanding, and appreciation of artistic qualities of a media text are traditional points of emphasis for the media education of the Soviet and post-Soviet period, while the preparation of the audience for living in a democratic society is more typical of the Western approach.

As for the development of skills of political/ideological analysis of different aspects of media/media culture, the differences in approaches, as reflected in table 1, are linked to the fact that the imposition of communist ideology in Soviet times led to a skeptical attitude toward this function later on.

The analysis of data in table 7 shows that 39.1% of experts in general think that as teachers they integrate media criticism and media literacy education to a considerable degree, and 29.7% of experts believe that they do this somewhat. However, only one-fourth of experts confess that they integrate media criticism little in their classes.

Additionally, if the answers of Russian and Ukrainian experts are compared to the answers of their Western colleagues, one can see that the number of Western professionals sure of considerable integration of media criticism in their classes is over one-half (56.6%) while in post-Soviet countries this number is only 21.9%.

> In our opinion, the synthesis of media education and criticism is very important. For this reason, the discussion about the role and function of media in society and analysis of various media texts in educational institutions is very important. Both media criticism and education have great potential in terms of the support of the efforts of educational institutions to develop the media competence of the audience.

While one-third (34.4%) of Russian and Ukrainian specialists acknowledge the weak degree of application of media criticism in their classrooms, only 12.5% of Western experts hold the same view.

These data, in our opinion, attest that:

• Even among the expert community around half (53.1%) integrate media criticism and media literacy education fairly little or very little.

• Russian and Ukrainian media educators integrate criticism in their classrooms far less than their western colleagues.

This is in spite of the fact that, according to the table 3 data, the majority of experts do recognize that the educational potential of media criticism in educational institutions remains untapped.

Because of the conflicting political, economic and

media situation around Ukraine that occurred in 2014, we considered it essential to compare not only the differences in expert opinions between post-Soviet countries and Western countries, but between Russian and Ukrainian ones as well. With all the similarities of approaches detected by the survey answers, it appears that many Ukrainian experts are sensitive about the correlation of the current political situation with the position of media criticism in education.

Despite the relatively small number of respondents, it is important to note that the survey results to one of the key questions, shown in table 6 (What media literacy education objectives can be facilitated by using media critics' texts in media literacy education classes?) almost completely coincided with the results of our previous sociological research (Fedorov, 2003). In 2003 we surveyed 26 experts in the field of media education/literacy from 10 countries. In particular, they answered questions about the main objectives of media education/media literacy. The comparative analysis of both surveys reveals the following characteristic congruence about the objectives of media education:

- Development of analytical/critical thinking, autonomy of the individual in terms of media (84.3% in 2003 and 87.5% in 2014).
- Development in the area of cultural/social media context (61.5% in 2003 and 62.5 in 2014).
- Development of good aesthetic perception, taste, understanding, and appreciation of artistic qualities of a media text (54.9% in 2003 and 53.1 in 2014).
- Development of the audience's ability to create and publish their own media texts (53.8% in 2003 and 53.1 in 2014).
- Learning about the history of media and media culture (37.8% in 2003 and 40.6% in 2014).
- Learning about the theory of media and media culture (47.9% in 2003 and 40.6 in 2014).
- Preparation of the audience for living in a democratic society (61.9% in 2003 and 56.2 in 2014).

However, there are some differences, for example, the objective of the development of communicative skills of the individual (57.3% in 2003 and 28.1% in 2014). In our opinion, this fact is not connected to a decrease in number of experts who chose this media education objective as one of the most important in 2014, because the share of Western experts in the 2003 questionnaire remained almost the same in 2014 (in the survey of 2003 14 (53.8%) Western experts were among the 26 participants, and in 2014 – 32 (50%) Western experts out of 64 respondents). We tend to believe that the fall in popularity of the objective of the development of communicative skills is due to the fact that 2014 experts reasonably think that communicative skills development by itself cannot be the aim of media education. There are now more vital objectives such as development of analytical/critical thinking, autonomy of the individual in terms of media, development of skills of political/ideological analysis of different aspects of media/media culture, amplification of analytical skills related to the cultural and social context of media texts, and preparation of the audience for living in a democratic society (56.2% of votes).

Quite reasonably, one of the leading Russian experts added in the margins of our survey that the development of mass media criticism in Russia as well as in foreign countries is hindered by the lack of interest on the part of the authorities and the media business in having a media-competent audience of active citizens (which is an essential prerequisite of democratic development in a modern media saturated society). But media criticism is more and more often used as a new information propaganda resource, used to

> We should expand the participation of academic communities, researchers, specialists in different fields (teachers, sociologists, psychologists, cultural studies experts, journalists and philosophers), institutions of culture and education, social organizations and funds in order to promote the development of media literacy/media competence of the citizens, and to create organizational structures able to implement the whole spectrum of media education objectives in alliance with media critics.

influence communities of media professionals and mass audiences during crisis situations.

To sum up, media criticism and education have a lot in common: for instance, both media education and criticism place great emphasis on the development of analytical thinking in the audience. One of the main objectives of media education is, in fact, to teach the audience not only to analyze media texts of various types and genres, but to understand the mechanisms of their construction and functioning in society. As a matter of fact, media criticism deals with the same thing, appealing to professional and mass audiences. Therefore, in our opinion, the synthesis of media education and criticism is very important. For this reason, the discussion about the role and function of media in society and analysis of various media texts in educational institutions is very important. Both media criticism and education have great potential in terms of the support of the efforts of educational institutions to develop the media competence of the audience (Buckingham, 2003; Fenton, 2009; Hobbs, 2007; Korochensky, 2003; Miller, 2009; Sparks, 2013). We should expand the participation of academic communities, researchers, specialists in different fields (teachers, sociologists, psychologists, cultural studies experts, journalists and philosophers), institutions of culture and education, social organizations and funds in order to promote the development of media literacy/media competence of the citizens, and to create organizational structures able to implement the whole spectrum of media education objectives in alliance with media critics.

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